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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

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3 Hr

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "USES FOR THE CRANBERRY CROP." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. D. A.

--ooOoo--

The lady who feeds her family well on little money, she's the one who watches for news of the big crops. For she knows that when a food is plentiful, it is also likely to be cheap. And she knows that then is the time to serve it often.

The cheering news I have for you today is about the cranberry crop. It's large this fall. If you like cranberries, now is the time to indulge in them. And if you are planning the meals for the household, this is the year to include plenty of cranberry dishes. Look in that recipe file of yours. Have you lined up all your favorite cranberry recipes? That's the way to prepare for a big crop of a good food.

My personal opinion is that cranberries are some of our most cheering and refreshing fruits. Just when the world grows gloomy and dull outside and the fresh garden things have all gone, along come these bright berries to give color to our meals and also a lively tart flavor.

Some unimaginative people in this world have an idea that cranberries are useful only for Thanksgiving sauce and jelly. That's a sad mistake. They are good in a great variety of dishes. And their season lasts from fall until the end of winter.

Before I talk about a few of the many cranberry uses, maybe I'd better say a word about choosing cranberries in the market. Cranberries vary in size and color according to the variety, but you'll rarely find them in your market selling under their variety name. The most common are the rather large, bright-red berries and the small, darker kinds which are sweeter than the light-colored sorts.

How can you tell good quality in cranberries? Well, look for a fresh plump berry that is firm and has a high luster. Avoid berries that are shriveled, or dull looking, or soft.

Now about using cranberries. Their bright color and tart taste make them excellent appetizers. Mix a little cooked cranberry juice with sweet pineapple juice or with cider or ginger ale and serve the mixture icy cold. Or serve chilled grapefruit sections with red cranberry juice poured over them.

Cranberries are also good in relishes. Of course, their brightest color appears when they are cooked. But for use in relishes, they are good raw. You can make a delicious cranberry relish by running a pound of cranberries and a whole orange through a food chopper, and then adding a cup of sugar or a cup of strained honey, and just a bit of salt to bring out the flavor. This relish is

very good company for a roast of meat or for chicken, duck or turkey. If you store it in a tight jar and keep it in your refrigerator, it should keep well 2 or 3 weeks.

As for cranberry desserts, they are legion. Cranberry gelatin mixtures are good. Cranberry sponge is a beautiful dessert. It is simply a cranberry juice and gelatin mixture whipped fluffy when it begins to set and then made even fluffier with beaten egg whites. Let it stand in a mold to chill. It will come out a lovely rose color. The other day we mentioned cranberry chiffon pie with a filling of this same cranberry gelatin sponge. You can make lovely frozen ices and sherbets of cranberries.

If you want a hot cranberry dessert, try steamed cranberry pudding with hot cranberry sauce. Or try hot cranberry pie or tarts.

The traditional New England cranberry pie looks much like a red cherry pie with criss-cross pastry strips over the top. But many people find plain cranberry pie a little too acid for their taste, just as many people find raisin pie a little too sweet. So a compromise pie to please everybody is cranberry-and-raisin pie -- not too tart, not too sweet, plenty of flavor and good looks.

The same combination of cranberries and raisins makes a good jam. Chop 2 cups of berries with 1 cup of raisins and 2 oranges. Add 3 cups of sugar, 2 cups of water and a bit of salt. Cook until thick -- about half an hour. Stir as you cook so it won't stick. Pour in hot sterilized jelly glasses, cover with paraffin, and store in a cool place. You can also use cranberries in conserve. Cook them with quince, apple, orange, chopped nuts, and sugar.

But wait. I almost forgot the brightest and easiest of cranberry spreads-- honey cranberry preserves. Use 1 cup of water; 1 and one-half cups honey; and 1 quart of cranberries. Cook until the berries are soft. Then remove the berries but continue boiling the sirup until it cooks down to the amount you'll need to just cover the berries. Put the berries back in the hot sirup, pour the mixture into jars, and seal. By the way, the berries will keep their shape better, if you prick each one before cooking and if you cook them slowly at first.

As for cranberry jelly, here are a few points to know before you make it. Cranberries are so rich in both acid and pectin that they jell quickly and easily. But, though they make a firm jelly, it's not very staple. Once the surface is cut, it "weeps" -- becomes watery. So when you make cranberry jelly, better mold it in individual containers that hold just enough for one meal. You can make a delicious and less "weepy" jelly by combining apple and cranberry juice.

Speaking of that combination of apple and cranberry, it's good in sauce, too. You can make a beautiful red sauce by adding a little strained cranberry juice to plain apple sauce.

Now let's see if I've forgotten to mention some good cranberry uses. My, yes, I haven't said anything yet about candied cranberries.

Candied cranberries are a beautiful, delicious and wholesome sweet -- good for the children and everyone else in the family. If you want to give your friends an original Christmas gift this year, remember candied cranberries. Store them in a tight jar. I haven't time to give you the recipe for them today, but if you'll listen in next Tuesday -- question-and-answer day, I'll give you directions then.

